

# Philadelphia District Office News Update

A newsletter for the Philadelphia District community on immigration issues

Winter 2002/Number 8



## Attorney General designates Liberia under Temporary Protective Service Program



The Attorney General announced the designation of Temporary Protected Status on September 27, 2002, for nationals of Liberia. The designation of TPS is effective from October 1, 2002 to October 1, 2003.

Liberians who have resided in the United States since September 29, 2001, have remained here under a presidential directive authorizing Deferred Enforced Departure (DED), a temporary measure similar to TPS. Under this new TPS designation, eligible nationals of Liberia (or aliens having no nationality who last habitually resided in Liberia) may remain and work in the United States for an additional year. There are approximately 15,000 to 20,000 nationals of Liberia who are eligible for registration.

Section 244 of the Immigration and Nationality Act authorizes the Attorney General to grant TPS to aliens in the United States who are nationals of countries that are subject to ongoing armed conflict, environmental disaster, or extraordinary and temporary conditions. Based on a thorough review by the Department of State and Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS), the Attorney General has determined that there is an ongoing armed conflict in Liberia. This conflict might seriously threaten the personal safety of nationals returning to the country.

To be eligible for TPS under this designation, an alien:

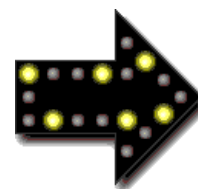
- Must be a national of Liberia (or an alien having no nationality who last habitually resided in Liberia)
- Will have been physically present and residing in the United States since October 25, 2001, 2002
- Be admissible as an immigrant except as provided under section 244(c)(2)(A) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (the Act), and not be ineligible for TPS under section 244 (c)(2)(B) of the Act

- Apply for TPS within the registration period, which begins on October 1, 2002 and ends on March 31, 2003.

Because DED expires on September 29, 2002, Liberians who have no other lawful status and who wish to live and work in the United States must apply for TPS. During the registration period, applicants for TPS must submit the following package to the INS District Office that has jurisdiction over place of residence:

- Form I-821, Application for Temporary Protected Status
- Form I-765, Application for Employment Authorization
- Two identification photographs (1 ½ inches x 1 ½ inches)
- Supporting evidence of identity, nationality, and proof of residence, as provided in the regulations at 8CFR 244.9
- All applicable fees

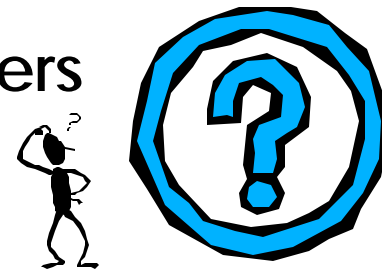
### Inside



- ▲ Community Announcement
- ▲ Case Status Now Available Online
- ▲ Special Registration Procedures
- ▲ Deadlines for Schools with Foreign Students
- ▲ District Telephone Numbers



# TSP Program Questions and Answers



## 1. Why is the Attorney General designating Liberia under the Temporary Protected Status program (TPS)?

After reviewing country conditions and consulting with the appropriate government agencies, the Attorney General has determined that conditions in Liberia support a TPS designation. Specifically, based upon a recent review on conditions within Liberia by the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) and the Department of State, the Attorney General concluded that there is an ongoing-armed conflict in Liberia, and due to such conflict, returning Liberian nationals to that state would pose a serious threat to their personal safety.

## 2. When will this TPS designation become effective?

The designation of Liberia for TPS becomes effective on October 1, 2002 and remains in effect until October 1, 2003.

## 3. Who is eligible for TPS under this designation?

To be eligible for TPS under this designation, an alien must:

- Be a national of Liberia (or an alien having no nationality who last habitually resided in Liberia)
- Will have been physically present and residing in the United States since October 1, 2002
- Be admissible as an immigrant except as provided under section 244(c)(2)(A) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (the Act), and not be ineligible for TPS under section 244(c)(2)(B) of the Act
- Apply for TPS within the registration period, which begins on October 1, 2002 and ends on March 31, 2003.

## 4. How Do I Register for TPS?

During the registration period that runs from October 1, 2002 through March 31, 2003, applicants for TPS must submit the following package requirements to the Service district office that has jurisdiction over your place of residence:

- An Application for Temporary Protected Status, Form I-821
- An Application for Employment Authorization, Form I-765
- Two identification photographs (1½ inches x 1½ inches)
- Supporting evidence of identity, nationality, and proof of residence, as provided in the regulations at 8 CFR 244.9
- All applicable fees, as discussed immediately below.

Fees:

1. A \$50 fee must accompany each Form I-821.
2. Each applicant who is 14 years of age or older must also submit a \$50 fingerprint fee.
3. An applicant who seeks employment authorization documentation must submit Form I-765 with the \$120 fee. An applicant who does not seek employment authorization documentation does not need to submit the \$120 fee, but must still complete and submit Form I-765 for data gathering purposes.

Applicants may request that certain fees be waived, in accordance with the regulations.

## 5. Do I need to submit fingerprints?

While a complete TPS application package must include the \$50 fingerprint fee for every applicant who is 14 years of age or older, applicants should NOT submit a completed fingerprint card (FD-258, Application Card) with the TPS application package. Upon receipt of the TPS application package, the Service will mail the applicant an appointment letter with instructions to appear for fingerprinting at a Service-authorized Application Support Center (ASC).

## 6. Where should I send my complete TPS application?

Applicants should submit the TPS application package to the Service district office that has jurisdiction over your place of residence.

## 7. Should I Register for TPS If I Currently am under Deferred Enforced Departure (DED)?

Many Liberians who have resided in the United States since September 29, 2001, have remained here under a presidential directive authorizing Deferred Enforced Departure (DED), a temporary protection measure similar to TPS. On September 29, 2002, the Liberian DED directive expires, as do all employment authorization documents (EAD) issued to Liberians pursuant to that directive. Liberians who have no other lawful immigration status, but who wish to remain and work, in the United States after September 29, 2002, should apply for TPS benefits in the manner described above.

## 8. How is DED different from TPS?

DED is similar to TPS in that it allows aliens of a particular nationality to remain and work in the United States without the threat of deportation. The President issues a DED directive based on his constitutional authority related to foreign policy, whereas the Attorney General has statutory authority to designate a country for TPS. TPS requires aliens of a specific nationality who are present in the U.S. by the deadline to come forward and submit an application to INS, which then decides whether the alien

*(continued on page 9)*



# INS announces Case Status Online

## *Many applicants for benefits can check case status using the Internet*

The Immigration & Naturalization Service announced on October 28, 2002, the successful implementation of Case Status Online—a concrete example of INS’ commitment to improving customer service while guaranteeing process integrity.

Customers who have a receipt number for an application or petition filed at an INS Service Center can check the status of their pending case online through the INS website and avoid prolonged waits on the phone or at a local office.

“We shared the frustration of customers and employees who complained that there was no easy way to check the status of a pending case,” said INS Commissioner James Ziglar. “We expect that the availability of Case Status Online will reduce the number of customers who need to call or visit INS in person for this information. It also allows local field offices to focus on providing services that are only available by appointment or in-person visit.”

Customers who do not have a receipt number will continue to receive information about their case by calling the National Customer Service Center at 1-800-375-5283 or 1-800-767-1833 (TTY for the hearing impaired) or by visiting their local INS field office.

The Case Status Online System is only the first of many improvements that will take place as the INS implements Immigration Services Modernization and will fundamentally transform and improve the Immigration Services’ program. Immigration Services Modernization is centered on service to customers and stakeholders; employee development; process, technology and business improvements; and management infrastructure.

*For more information, please access the INS web site: [www.ins.usdoj.gov](http://www.ins.usdoj.gov) or call the INS National Customer Service Center: 1-800-375-5283. Forms can be easily downloaded from the INS web site, or requested by calling 1-800-870-FORM.*

### **1. How can this site help me?**

This site serves to provide customers (and their representatives) access to case status for applications submitted to INS Service Centers. This site provides around the clock and immediate access to this case status information.

**2. What type(s) of information can I search for on this site?** You may search for the status of an immigration

benefits application submitted to an INS Service Center via the application receipt number assigned to you by the INS.

### **3. What is an application receipt number?**

An application receipt number is mailed to a customer after they have submitted a application to an INS Service Center. Unfortunately, you will not be able to access case status information on this site without an application receipt number.

### **4. Is the history of my application’s case status information available on this site?**

No, only the most recent status information is available on this site. Historical case status information is not maintained by this site.

**5. How often is the case status information on this site updated?** The case status information on this site is updated regularly throughout the business day. If any action is taken regarding your case, the change will be reflected on this site within a few minutes of the action-taking place.

**6. Does this site provide case status information for all types of INS applications?** This site supports applications filed at INS Service Centers.

**7. Does this site provide support for any languages other than English?** Yes, this site also provides support for Spanish.

**8. Is a receipt number required to perform case status searches via this site?** Yes, an application receipt number is required to perform case status searches via this site. There is no other way to locate case status information. This site does not maintain any personal information that may have been provided with your application, thus you will not be able to search via any other means.

### **9. What should I do if I have submitted an application, but have not received a receipt number yet?**

You will have to wait for your receipt number to arrive in the mail from INS. If you have questions about your application receipt number, please call the NCSC at 1-800-375-5283 or 1-800-767-1833 (TTY).

**10. Do I always have to access this site to search for application case status information?** No, you can receive the same information provided through this site by calling the automated telephone system, INS Direct, at the Service Center where your application was filed.



## Community Announcement



Recently, foreign students may have been informed that they must report to the nearest INS office no later than October 30, 2002 for special registration interviews. This information is not correct. Special registration procedures currently pertain only to those nonimmigrant visitors who were registered upon their arrival into the United States by Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) inspections officers at ports of entry and notified at that time of the requirement to appear at an INS office for an interview.

Nonimmigrant visitors are selected for special registration because they are citizens or nationals of countries (currently Iran, Iraq, Libya, Sudan, Syria) designated through publication of a notice in the Federal Register, or they are of interest based on current national security, or law enforcement concerns. They are fingerprinted, photographed, and interviewed upon entry to the United States.

Nonimmigrant visitors who have been admitted into the United States without being fingerprinted, photographed, and interviewed by INS immigration officials, are not special registrants, and therefore are not required to follow special registration procedures. This means that there is no requirement to report to an INS office for an interview, and there are no restrictions or requirements related to leaving the United States. Upon reentry, however, an individual may be selected for special registration. Any changes to the procedures will be announced through a notice published in the Federal Register.

Additional Information on special registration is available at the INS web page at [www.ins.usdoj.gov](http://www.ins.usdoj.gov), or by telephone at the INS National Customer Service Center (1-800) 375-5283 / TTY Telephone Service (1-800) 767-1833 for the hearing impaired.

### Did you Know?

Philadelphia District Director Kenneth J. Elwood recently announced his retirement. He will retire in January after 25 years of federal service.

## Special Registration

The United States has a proud tradition of welcoming immigrants and visitors. This tradition is renewed and enriched by each and every law-abiding immigrant and visitor. Because of terrorist attacks that claimed the lives of thousands of Americans as well as nationals from many other countries, new regulations have been put into effect to help ensure the safety of all persons in the United States — citizens, residents, and visitors as well.

Special Registration is the first phase of a new system that will let the government keep track of the arrival and departure of nonimmigrants who come to the U.S. every year. Some of the approximately 35 million nonimmigrants who enter the U.S. every year will be required to register with the INS in accordance with the special registration procedures. These special procedures will require that certain nonimmigrants be fingerprinted and photographed when arriving in the U.S.

If the nonimmigrant stays in the U.S. for 30 days or more, they will have to appear in person at an INS office and will have to notify the INS when they change address, employment, school, etc. Nonimmigrants who must follow these special procedures will also have to notify INS when they leave the country. They must do so *only* by reporting in person to an INS officer at a specially designated port of departure.

### Who Must Register?

- Nonimmigrants who are nationals or citizens of Iran, Iraq, Libya, Sudan and Syria
- Nonimmigrants who have been designated by the State Department at American embassies or consulates
- Any other nonimmigrant identified by INS officers at airports, seaports and land ports of entry in accordance with 8 CFR 264.1(f)(2).

### How to Register?

An INS officer at the arrival port of entry will refer nonimmigrants subject to registration to the area where they will be photographed, fingerprinted, and interviewed. Detailed information on these procedures can be found at <http://www.ins.usdoj.gov/graphics/lawenfor/specialreg/SRProcL.htm>.

### Where to Register?

#### Initial Registration

An INS officer will register nonimmigrants subject to the special procedures when they arrive at a U.S. airport, seaport, or land port of entry.



# Certification rule issued for SEVIS enrollment

*Schools wishing to accept new students are strongly encouraged to submit Form I-17 in SEVIS by November 15, 2002.*

The Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) is immediately implementing regulations governing the review and certification of schools for enrollment in the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS). With a 60-day public comment period, this interim rule takes effect immediately upon publication in the Federal Register on September 25.

This rule implements Phase II of the transition to SEVIS and provides that all schools not already approved to use

## Special Registration

*(Continued from page 4)*

### After 30 Days or More in the U.S.

Registered nonimmigrants who remain in the U.S. for 30 days or longer must report for an in-person interview at a designated INS interviewing office for special registration between 30 and 40 days after their arrival date. NOTE: Not all INS offices are designated as interviewing offices for special registration. Registered nonimmigrants who remain in the U.S. for one year or longer must report in person to the nearest designated INS interviewing office each and every year, no later than 10 days from the anniversary of initial arrival date into the U.S.

A list of designated INS interviewing offices for special registration will be given to nonimmigrants upon their initial registration (and is available through a link on the web site). The location of the designated INS district offices or sub-offices may also be found by calling the INS National Customer Service Center at 1-800-375-5283.

### When Leaving the U.S.

Registered nonimmigrants are required to notify an INS officer when they leave or travel from the U.S. When a non-immigrant is initially registered, they will be given a list of airports, seaports, or land ports to use to leave the U.S. Please note: All special registrants MUST depart ONLY through one of these designated ports of departure. (A Notice to this effect was published in the Federal Register on September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2002.) This requirement went into effect on October 1, 2002.

For more information on Special Registration, visit <http://www.ins.usdoj.gov/graphics/lawenfor/specialreg/index.htm>

SEVIS, including a school that would have been eligible for preliminary enrollment but did not enroll, must undergo a certification review. Phase I enrollment or preliminary enrollment allowed schools that had been INS-certified for at least three years and were accredited by the Department of Education to enroll without paying the certification fee and in advance of a full review. Preliminary enrollment began on July 1, 2002 and ended with the publishing of this rule. The rule's major requirements include:

- All schools currently approved for attendance by nonimmigrants are required to apply for INS review for continuation of approval and access to SEVIS no later than January 30, 2003. The present approval of any school that has not filed for enrollment in SEVIS by January 30, 2003 will automatically be withdrawn on January 31 and the school will not be allowed to accept foreign students.

- Schools must electronically complete a Form I-17 (Petition for Approval of School for Attendance by Nonimmigrant Student) in SEVIS and submit a certification fee of \$580 at least 75 days (by November 15, 2002) prior to January 30, 2003. Any school wishing to admit new foreign students or issue new forms for existing students must be using SEVIS by January 30, 2003. Schools that file petitions in less than 75 days (after November 15, 2002) may hamper the review process, delaying their approval and ability to electronically submit data on new students.

- Schools that were approved for preliminary enrollment by the INS must complete the certification review process, including required fee, prior to May 14, 2004.

- The INS will review the approval of a school every two years.

"We have made significant progress in getting SEVIS up and running since the opening of the preliminary period on July 1," said INS Commissioner James Ziglar. "This highly anticipated rule will pick up where the preliminary enrollment ended, greatly assisting INS as it works to enroll bona fide schools in SEVIS."

SEVIS is an Internet-based computer system that will enable schools and program sponsors to transmit electronic information and event notifications to INS and the Department of State throughout the stay of a foreign or exchange student in the United States. To date, 2,384 schools are currently in various stages of SEVIS while 993 are awaiting approval to use the system.

For more information on SEVIS, visit <http://www.ins.usdoj.gov/graphics/services/tempbenefits/sevp.htm>.



# Philadelphia district surpasses FY02 goals

Faced with an ever changing organization since the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, the Philadelphia District of INS has managed to exceed its goals for Fiscal Year 2002 in all program areas—Adjudications, Investigations, Detention and Removal, and Inspections. Below are some highlights of those achievements.

## Adjudications

- Reduced old cases from a total of 1,356 pending adjustment to 612 cases and N-400 cases from 613 cases to 214 cases. This was a 58 percent decrease in the total of the golden oldies pending.
- Exceeded I-485 goals: The district completed 7,722 cases, surpassing the 7,565 goal. N-400 goals: Completed 12,733 cases, surpassing the 12,656 goal.
- Implemented the Consolidated Adjustment Pre-Interview Process (CAPP), which allows adjudicators to better track, review and schedule cases with fewer continuations at the time of interview. Currently, the majority of the district's old cases have been placed into this system; at some point, these cases will take precedence over the recently filed cases. This would eliminate most of the remaining old cases, diminishing attorney inquiries and congressional referrals.

## Investigations

- 155 individuals were presented for criminal prosecution. A large number of them was for re-entry after deportation. Additional prosecutions were for fraud, alien harboring, false statements, and firearms violations.
- 1,862 individuals were placed into removal proceedings with over 65 percent being criminal aliens. Additionally, over 150 arrests involving alien absconders were made.

## Detention and Removal

- The number of aliens removed from the United States in FY02 was 3,524, which is 32 percent more than the FY01 total of 2,382. In FY02, 1,434 criminal aliens were removed from the United States; 897 were removed in FY01.
- The Automated Biometric Identification System (IDENT) was completely implemented throughout the

district. All INS releases and removals are now input and checked through the system. This initiative ensures that the Philadelphia District is not releasing wanted criminals into the community or removing aliens wanted for other serious crimes.

## Philadelphia Inspections

- Over 1 million international passengers were inspected during FY02, resulting in a 15 percent increase over the last fiscal year.
- Gearing up for the opening of the new International Terminal of the Philadelphia Airport in January 2003, which will have 12 arrival and departure gates. The expansion far exceeds the current areas of immigration, requiring increased staff.
- Deployed the DataShare Program, which assists inspectors in detecting high-quality counterfeit visas.



With the help of the Department of State, local inspectors have been able to expose nearly 10 cases of document fraud. DataShare enables inspectors to use a computer to view both biographic information and photographic images of visa recipients who received their documents at consular posts thousands of miles away.



# INS Philadelphia District

## Wondering where to call?

National Customer Service Center: 800-375-5283, TTY (for hearing impaired): 800-767-1833

INS Forms sent by mail: 800-870-3676

Internet website (for forms and information): [www.ins.usdoj.gov](http://www.ins.usdoj.gov)

Email address for Congressional use only: [phi.congressional@usdoj.gov](mailto:phi.congressional@usdoj.gov)

### INS Philadelphia District Office

1600 Callowhill Street, Philadelphia, PA 19130

215-656-7178 – Exams, 215-656-7095 (fax)

215-656-7195 – Investigations (to report suspected illegal alien activity)

215-656-7164 – Detention & Deportation

215-656-7180 – Congressional Line (for congressional use only)

Window Hours: M-W: 7:30 a.m.-3 p.m./ Th: 7:30 a.m. -11 a.m.

F: 7:30 a.m.-1 p.m.

### INS Pittsburgh Suboffice

2130 Federal Building, 1000 Liberty Avenue

Pittsburgh, PA 15222-4181

412-395-4465 – Exams, 412-395-6375 (fax)

Window Hours: M, Tu, Th & F : 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.

W: 9 - 11 a.m.

To report suspected illegal alien activity: 412-395-4464/63

### INS Dover Field Office

1305 McD Drive, Dover, DE 19901

302-730-9311, 302-730-9310 (fax)

Window Hours: M-F : 8 a.m. - 4 p.m.

### INS Charleston Field Office

210 Kanawha Blvd. W., Charleston, WV 25302

304-347-5766, 304-347-5765 (fax)

Window Hours: M-F : 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.

**INS Fingerprints** – Fingerprints are taken by INS only and by appointment after submitting an application for benefits with the application fee and a \$50 fingerprinting fee.

### Application Support Centers (ASCs)

• Philadelphia – 8th & Arch Sts. (enter on 8th St.)

• Pittsburgh – 800 Penn Ave., 1st Floor

Operational Hours: Tuesday through Saturday, 8 a.m. to 3:45 p.m.

Operational Hours: Tuesday through Saturday, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

• York – 3400 Concord Rd. Hours: M-F: 8 a.m.-4 p.m.

### Co-located INS Fingerprinting Offices

Operational hours for the locations below: Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

• Charleston, WV – 912 Virginia St.

Dover, DE – 1305 McD Drive

## INS Philadelphia Application Processing Times – October 2002

*Times reflect applications which include all required documentation.*

### Application Name and Form Number

### Processing Times

#### Philadelphia

#### Pittsburgh

1. Naturalization (N-400)	10 months
2. Adjustment of status (I-485)	10 months
3. Orphan Petitions (I-600) and Advance Processing Application for Orphans (I-600A)	1 month
4. Certificate of Citizenship (N-600)	2 months
5. Certificate of Citizenship for an adopted Child (N-643)	6 months
6. Replacement Certificate of Naturalization (N-565)	4 months
	Note 1

7.5 months
3 months
1 month
1 month
2 months
3 months
Note 1

### Note:

1. One to four months, depending if the file is in INS Phila., or is immediately retrievable from another INS office.

2. Processing times can be delayed due to difficulty obtaining a file, particularly in cases where the A-file is old, resulting in a manual search of records.



## INS opens Application Support Center in York

With an eye on boosting customer service throughout the Philadelphia district, INS held a ribbon cutting ceremony for the grand opening of its Application and Support Center (ASC) on February 19, 2002, on the grounds of the York County Prison in York, Pa. York County officials and congressional reps joined Philadelphia District Director Kenneth Elwood in marking the special occasion.

“Opening an ASC in York will greatly improve our effort to enhance customer service in the benefits process,” said District Director Ken Elwood. “Applicants in the central and northern region of Pennsylvania will no longer have to travel to Philadelphia or Pittsburgh for fingerprinting services.”

The Application Support Center will provide



**YORK COUNTY OFFICIAL CUTS THE RIBBON.** From l to r: Commissioner Christopher Reilly, Commissioner Shirley Glass, Commissioner James Donahue, DD Ken Elwood, ADDD Katrina Kane and Prison Warden Tom Hogan.



**THE STRICKLER FAMILY FARMHOUSE** is location of the new York Application Support Center. The farmhouse is one of the few surviving homes built by the first Pennsylvania German settlers of Springettsbury Township. Successive generations of the Strickler family added onto the original section of the house, thus enabling them to occupy the family farmstead for almost 200 years. The main house was built around 1740 with later additions being built in the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century. The original stone farmhouse, its accompanying additions and the family cemetery have remained nearly intact over a 250-year period.

applicants in southeastern Pennsylvania (who have filed for immigration benefits) with reliable and convenient fingerprinting services. The center will also process renewal applications for Alien Registration Cards (Green Cards) that have expired or will expire within six months.

The new center will serve counties in the southeastern region of Pennsylvania including Adams, Columbia, Cumberland, Dauphin, Franklin, Fulton, Juniata, Lancaster, Lebanon, Montour, Northumberland, Perry, Snyder, Union and York. There are more than 120 ASCs throughout the country—50 are located within an existing INS district or sub-office, and the remaining are located in separate facilities to enhance accessibility to customers.

INS's *News Update* is an unofficial publication of the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service Philadelphia District Office at 1600 Callowhill Street, Philadelphia, PA 19130. *News Update* is published for the community as well as congressional staffs and others interested in U.S. immigration. Readers with inquiries or requests may call the Editor at 215-656-7171, or fax your suggestions to 215-656-7200.

Kenneth J. Elwood, District Director  
Nieves Cardinale, Acting Deputy District Director

Niki Edwards,  
Editor/Public Affairs Officer



## TSP Q&As *(Continued from page 2)*

### **9. What is Late Initial Registration?**

Certain Liberian nationals may be eligible to apply for TPS subsequent to the initial registration period if, at the time of the initial registration period, they: (1) are non-immigrants; (2) have been granted voluntary departure status or any relief from removal; (3) have an application for change of status, adjustment of status, asylum, voluntary departure, or any relief from removal that is pending or subject to further review or appeal; (4) are parolees or have a pending request for parole; or (5) are the spouse or child of an alien currently eligible to be a TPS registrant. An applicant for late initial registration must register within a 60-day period immediately following the expiration or termination of one of the conditions described in items (1) through (5) of this paragraph.

### **10. Does Applying for TPS Affect an Application for Asylum or Any Other Immigration Benefit?**

No. Any national of Liberia who has already applied for, or plans to apply for, any other immigration benefit or protection, may also apply for TPS. An application for TPS does not preclude or adversely affect an application for any other immigration benefit. Similarly, denial of an application for asylum or any other immigration benefit does not affect an alien's ability to register for TPS, although the grounds of denial of that application may also lead to denial of TPS. For example, an alien who has been convicted of an aggravated felony is not eligible for asylum or TPS.

### **11. Will Liberian nationals protected by TPS be permitted to travel abroad during the TPS period?**

An individual granted TPS must remain continuously physically present in the United States. The grant of TPS status does not mean that you have permission to travel abroad, though permission to travel may be granted by the district director according to the Service's advance parole provisions. There is no appeal to a denial of advance parole. Failure to obtain advance parole prior to traveling abroad may result in the withdrawal of your TPS and/or the institution or re-calendar of removal proceedings.

### **12. What Happens When This TPS Designation Expires on October 1, 2003?**

At least 60 days before this TPS designation expires on October 1, 2003, the Attorney General will review conditions in Liberia and determine whether the conditions that warranted designation of Liberia under the TPS program continue to exist. Notice of that determination, including the basis for the determination, will be published in the Federal Register.

If the initial TPS designation is extended at that time, an alien who has received TPS benefits must re-register under the extension in order to maintain TPS benefits. If, however, the Attorney General terminates the TPS designation, TPS beneficiaries will return to the same immigration status they maintained before TPS (unless that status had since expired or been terminated) or to any other status they may have acquired while registered for TPS. Accordingly, if an alien had no lawful immigration status prior to receiving TPS and did not obtain any status during the TPS period, he or she will revert to that unlawful status upon termination of the TPS designation.

### **13. Where may I find forms and additional information?**

Information concerning the Liberia TPS program is available at the INS website, located at [www.ins.gov](http://www.ins.gov), or the INS National Customer Service Center, at 1-800-375-5283 (TTY: 1-800-767-1833). Applicants may obtain forms from the INS web site or by contacting the INS Forms Line, at 1-800-870-3676.

### **14. Doesn't this new TPS designation make it more difficult for Congress to enact legislation that would give Liberians lawful permanent resident status?**

Yes, the TPS statute has a requirement that, if the Congress is considering a bill that would give aliens who have TPS lawful permanent residence, the Senate must pass the bill by a super-majority. Congress has had three years of DED to enact legislation and it has not done so. The Administration has determined that TPS is the more appropriate remedy in this situation, and we had to make that decision without regard to what action Congress may or may not take on pending legislation.

### **15. What is the Department of Justice's position on the pending legislation (S.656/H.R.1806)?**

The Administration has not yet expressed a formal view on the legislation. We are in the process of finalizing our position on the bills.

## **New Congressional Liaison**

District Adjudication Officer Stacie Banks has assumed the duties of the Philadelphia District Congressional Liaison. Kristin Falcone has moved on to pursue a career as an INS criminal investigator. Congressional offices should continue to call 215-656-7180 for assistance.